

Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Chapter

Ontario Association for Families of Children with Communication Disorders

O.A.F.C.C.D.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome

To the 8th OAFCCD newsletter. It has been a while since the last one.

In this issue

- Meeting management for parents
- Update on Chapter's activities in 2000
- What is new at the website?
- Looking for volunteers
- Poem Books & Silver Ribbon update
- Tips for parents on learning at home

Susan

THANK YOU!

I would like to thank Lindsay Moir of Comhnadh Consulting for conducting 2 wonderful workshops for us last year.

I would also to thank Marsha of Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Preschool Speech and Language Services and Debbie of Lanark Early Integration Program (LEIP) for their partnering with OAFCCD to provide the workshops. Thanks for your support!

Thank you!!!



INTERNET WEBSITE SITE

Be sure to visit our Web Site at <http://www.cyberus.ca/oafccd/lanark>

2001 MEMBERSHIP FEES DUE!

Membership Fees, grants and donations are currently our only source of operating funds. Your Membership is very important to us and we need you to send your fees in as soon as possible. If you have not yet joined, please do so.

Please complete the Membership Form that you find included with this newsletter as soon as possible and return to the address shown on it.

The Annual Membership Fee is only \$20.00 (\$5 of which stays here at the local Chapter and \$15 that is sent to the Provincial Group) so please pay today!!!

This is the first increase in fees since OAFCCD was formed in 1994

NOTE: Fees will be waived upon request.

FAREWELL TO MEMBERS

In the past 2 years we have had some very dedicated and active members move away.

- Rita Taylor
- Dawn Light-Trethewey
- Joan Van Asseldonk

OAFCCD misses their support and help greatly.

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

February 26, 2001

7:00 p.m.
Smiths Falls Recreation Center
Room # 3 (upstairs)
77 Beckwith St., N.,
Smiths Falls

Guest Speaker:

Marsha Houlahan from Language Express will speak about 2 new initiatives in the Province – the Autism Initiative and Universal Infant Hearing Screening as well as updating us on the Preschool Speech Initiative.

Business:

I hope that everyone can attend. We will have to make some decisions on the direction of the group. Please bring any ideas or suggestions that you might have.

Meeting Management for Parents

There is something that makes even the most experienced speaker "dry up" when they are dealing with their child's teacher or principal! Is it our own childhood experiences revisited or is it something else?? As a private educational consultant, I am often dealing with parents who "can't believe I acted like that....." There is no doubt that successful meeting management is a key factor in getting appropriate educational services for your exceptional child. Here in Ontario, the Education Act and Regulation 181 provide for a variety of meetings which **should** allow parents to participate fully in the defining of needs, placement and support for exceptional children. Yet, a significant percentage of parents who attend these meetings continue to be frustrated, and even alienated, by the process. The following tips are taken from a workshop for parents, Strategies for Successful Meeting Management- a role-playing workshops for parents presented by Comhnadh Consulting.

"Never walk alone..."

As a rule of thumb, I advise parents NEVER to attend an IPRC, IEP or Team Meeting alone. Having a second person there gives you "morale-support" and a lot more!! Give that person a clear role... they can be an expert to contribute valuable information ... they can be a recorder keeping good notes for you they can be an intervenor who steps in when you are starting to get too emotional in your responses ... they can be a facilitator who helps keep the process moving forward.

Do your prep, they did theirs...

Most parents arrive at school meetings only ready to react to what the school says. You should have your meeting goals...KNOW and SHARE, tell the meeting what you hope to accomplish. Have your presentation written out and copied for everyone. Assemble your evidence and have it highlighted and organized! Nothing undermines your credibility more than repeatedly saying "I'm sure it says that somewhere in here....." (Then being unable to find it!! Don't be diverted from your objectives...keep the discussion focused on your goal, not their problems...

Listen...and agree...

Listen to the educators' reports and positions ... where you agree be sure to let them know. If we can agree on several items, we have accomplished something (and set a "working together" tone). "Now that we have some agreement, let's get focused on the areas where we don't agree..."

Don't be afraid to adjourn...

Marathon meetings often result in "agreement by exhaustion..." If a meeting has accomplished all it is going to accomplish, then summarize what has been agreed upon, and set a date to continue. Remember, these are steps in a process NOT "take it or leave it" meetings. Only continue for more than an hour if you have consensus to do so.

Watch where you sit..."

There are "power seats" at every table. Meeting control is often established by where people sit. I try to arrive early and choose a seat near the chair person. Never sit beside your "advocate"...they can't read your body language. You need eye contact!!! 60% of communication is non-verbal.. Make sure that you have it!!!!

As a consultant, I urge you to be purposeful and pro-active. Make these meetings work for your child. This will depend on how you manage the meeting!!!

Lindsay Moir is a consultant with Comhnadh Consulting in London, Ontario, Canada. He can be reached at l.moir@sympatico.ca or (519) 660-0493. His services are described on his company's web-site:

<http://www3.sympatico.ca/l.moir>

Our chapter also has copies of Lindsay's Moir Book Education Access Resource Guide 2000 for \$12.00 each for sale. Contact Susan for more information.

Update on Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Chapters activities in 2000

Due to lack of interest in the local chapter we did not do very much last year. I am hoping that this newsletter might jump start our little group again.

- We held 1 regular chapter meeting in September but I was the only one to show up.
 - With Lanark Early Integration Program (LEIP) we had a workshop with Lindsay Moir of Comhnadh Consulting in April. The topic of the workshop was Transition to School and Transition Plans in High School. 20 people attended the 2-hour workshop.
 - No issues of the newsletter was produced in 2000
 - In October with the help of LEIP and Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Preschool Speech & Language Services we held a full day workshop with Lindsay Moir. The workshops were Partners: Parents, School & Community, Writing Effective Needs Statements, Transition to School and Office Hours. 14 people attended this workshop.
 - Deanna Garton and myself (Susan Richards) represented OAFCCD on the Upper Canada District School Board's SEAC. We make a good team! As far as I know we will both be continuing on SEAC.
 - JoAnne Larente sat on the Catholic School Board SEAC for part of the year but resigned.
 - Connie Beckett and Joan Van Assledonk sat on the system committee of Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Preschool Speech & Language Services.
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|---|------------|-------------------|
| ➤ Money in Bank account on Jan 1, 2000 | \$1,349.97 | |
| Membership fees collected - 6 | 90.00 | |
| Fundraising (poem books & silver ribbons) | 397.49 | |
| Workshops | 565.34 | |
| Interest | 4.10 | |
| | | \$2,406.90 |

Expenses paid out

(photocopying, postage, workshop expenses, forwarded memberships, etc)

\$1501.75

Money in Bank account on December 31, 2000

\$905.15

What is new at the Website?

In September 2000 Alison Morse, the Provincial coordinator, and her helpers formatted most of the parent resource documents that OAFCCD have in their files and put them up on the OAFCCD main website. You will find hundreds of documents there with tons of useful information. The address is <http://www.cyberus.ca/oafccd/main.htm>

Also new this month on the website is an OAFCCD members only mailing list. This will allow OAFCCD members province wide to communicate with each other. To join the email list go to the following URL and follow the instructions there. <http://www.cyberus.ca/oafccd/lanark/list.htm>

Looking for Volunteers

The Lanark, Leeds & Grenville Preschool Speech & Language Services also know as Language Express are looking for at least 4 OAFCCD members to sit on their system committee as parent representatives. They are looking for 2 parents from the Lanark area and 2 parents from Leeds & Grenville.

We also need a Lanark, Leeds & Grenville OAFCCD representative and alternate to sit on the Catholic School Board's SEAC (Special Education Advisory Committee).

Poem Book & Silver Ribbons Update

To date we have sold approximately 260 poem books and have either sold or given away 170 silver ribbons. Poem books are still available for \$10.00 each from any member or \$13.00 via mail and there are still a few silver ribbons available for \$5.00 each or \$5.50 via mail. Both these items make excellent end of the school year gifts for teachers and support staff! I have included an order form with this newsletter.

If you still have **uncollected money or unsold poem books or silver ribbons** please contact Susan (284-1977 or 283-3709) to arrange pick up or drop off at Creative Computing, 18 Beckwith St. N., Smiths Falls.

Tips for Parents on Learning at Home

by Margaret Schrader, M.S., C.C.C.

Introduction

Being a parent is a very special role. Parents are responsible for teaching their children about life and how to live it fully. This can be a very big job, especially if your child has communication difficulties. Parents often need information about how to best meet the needs of their child.

Your child's speech and language clinician can give you helpful information about your child's speech and language development. The clinician can also suggest specific activities to help your child learn at home. In addition, there are a few basic guidelines on teaching and learning which can help you and your child succeed:

Tips for Parents

1. Let your child feel loved.

Touching, hugs, kisses, gentle words, or an approving smile will help your child feel relaxed and confident about learning. Use a happy tone of voice to convey love and acceptance. When your child feels loved, the child is more likely to be open to learning.

2. Remember that your child is just a child.

It's important to keep your expectations appropriate to your child's abilities. Ask your speech clinician about your child's language abilities. That way, you won't expect too much—or too little—from your child.

3. Give your child approval.

Appreciate any success in learning your child accomplishes. Compliments will encourage your child to continue to learn. Criticism may discourage your child. Accept that your child can make mistakes. Each child is unique. Let your child know that you accept your child's strengths and weaknesses.

4. Help your child to feel important.

Take time to do things with your child. Driving in the car, going to the store, and doing family activities are all opportunities for learning. Your child will appreciate your time and attention.

5. Remember that learning can be fun.

Have a good time with your child. Play together. Do things that delight both of you. If you do not

enjoy what you are doing, neither will your child. Follow your child's lead in finding things that are fun to do.

6. Talk to your child.

Even if your child does not seem to understand at first, talk often about what you are doing together. Give your child time to respond.

7. Really listen to your child.

Get down to your child's eye level, and look at your child as you are listening. Respond to what your child says. This shows your child that you are sincerely interested in the child's thoughts and feelings. Make sure your child has enough opportunities to be listened to.

8. Share your ideas and experiences with your child's speech clinician, doctor, or teacher.

Share information and ask questions about your child's learning needs. Let them know about situations which may affect your child's learning, such as illnesses or problems at home.

9. Take an interest in your child's schoolwork or therapy.

Help your child learn to be enthusiastic about learning. Talk about school and therapy in a positive way.

Summary

You are your child's first, and most important, teacher. You set an example for your child of how to listen and talk with others. You can make a big difference in how well your child develops communication skills. It is important to help your child learn and practice communication skills at home. As your child uses these new skills in everyday activities, you can feel proud of your child's success.

Refer to:

- 4.0 Articles on Learning to Talk and Understand
- 5.0 Articles on Home Activities for Speech and Language Development